CHAPTER III

THE FIRST REVOLUTION

• A DETAILED history of the First Revolution is outside the scope of this narrative. But a brief account is necessary for a correct appreciation of the subsequent activities of Dr. Sun Yat-sen. As has been made plain in the last Chapter, branches of the *Tung Meng Hui,* and anti-dynastic secret societies were at work in many parts of China in 1911. The Wu-Han cities (Hankow, Wuchang and Hanyang), on the middle Yangtze had been selected as one of the centres of the conspiracy for a general rising. But although some progress had been made in promoting disafiection among the Hupeh troops, plans for an actual revolt had not matured. There is reason to believe that it was not until the end of the year, at the earliest, that the revolutionaries intended to come out into the open at Wu-Han.

Their plans were—as had so often happened previously—upset by an accident. Sun Wu, Liu Kung, and other conspirators were engaged in manufacturing bombs in a house in the Russian Concession at Hankow. What happened on October 9, 1911, was described in a Hankow paper the following morning:—

"The detonation of a bomb in the

Russian Concession yesterday afternoon was responsible for the discovery of a revolutionary element, the existence of which had hitherto not been suspected. At 4 p.m. the police in the neighbour-